THE AMERICAN

NATIONAL PREACHER.

No. 2. Vol. XX.] FEBRUARY, 1846. [Whole No. 230

SERMON CCCCXV.

THE OLD AGE OF PIETY.

Preached in the First Church, New-Haven, on the 12th of October, 1845; the Lord's Day after the decease of Mrs. Mary Dwight, widow of President Dwight.

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Psalm xcii: 14. "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age."

The text is spoken of the righteous, in a poetical figure in which the righteous—that is, they who trust in God and love Him—are compared, as in the first Psalm, with a tree which strikes its roots deep into the ground, and is continually refreshed with living springs.

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree;
He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
Those that are planted in the house of the Lord
Shall flourish in the courts of our God.
They shall bring forth fruit in old age,
They shall be vigorous and flourishing;
To show that the Lord is upright:
He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him!"

The point on which the Psalmist in this passage fixes, as he contemplates the blessedness of God's own children, is the beauty and happiness of their old age. The court or open area in the center of an eastern dwelling, and especially the court of any great and stately dwelling, was often adorned with a tree, or sometimes with more than one, for beauty, for shade, and, as it might be, for fruit. There sometimes the palm-tree, planted by the cool fountain, shot up its tall trunk toward the sky, and waved its green top, far above the roof, in the sun-light and the breeze. There sometimes the olive, transplanted from the rocky hill-side, may have flourished under the protection and culture of the household, and may have rewarded their care with the rich abundance of its nutritious berries. With such images in his mind, the Psalmist, having spoken of the brief prosperity of the wicked, and having compared it with the springing and flourishing of the grass, which grows to its little height only to be immediately cut down, naturally and beautifully compares the righteous, not with the deciduous herbage, but with

the hardy tree that lives on through the summer's drought and the winter's storms, and from season to season still renews its growth. These trees of righteousness, as the poet conceives of them, are "planted in the house of the Lord;" they stand fair and "flowering in the courts of our God"—even "in old age they bring forth fruit"—they are "full of sap and flourishing"—they are living memorials "to show that the Lord is faithful," and that those who trust in Him shall never be confounded.

The subject of thought, then, to which the text invites us, is *the old age of piety*, as distinguished from the old age of the worldling. It may be profitable to us all, to fix our thoughts a few moments on this theme—the old age of the believer. What is it? Wherein consists its beauty, its usefulness, its happiness? Wherein is it unlike the old age of those who have lived and are living without God in the world?

1. The old age of the Christian is the old age of a life of *faith* and of *communion with God*. Faith, the principle which lays hold on things unseen, and makes them realities to the soul, is from first to last one grand characteristic that distinguishes the righteous, as the Psalmist here calls them, from the ungodly. They walk by faith, looking upon things not as they appear to the eye of sense and groveling selfishness, but as they appear in the light of God's truth; and in so doing, they walk with God, and there is communion of thought and affection between their mind and the mind of God. Thus their path is as the shining light that shineth more and more to the perfect day. They are making progress in faith and in communion with God, not only during the period of youth and of maturity, while the powers of mere nature are still unfolding and strengthening, but afterward, amid the infirmities of decaying nature, even to the close of life. The good man's judgment may begin to fail—his imagination may fail—his active energy for one work and another may fail, but his faith fails not, and the charity—the holy love—which is communion with God, "never faileth." The ungodly, on the other hand, the men of this world, look only at the things of this world, the things that are seen, the things that pertain exclusively to time. Of God and his government, of Heaven and hell, of eternity, of sin, and of salvation from the curse and power of sin, they habitually take no cognizance. Such things enter very little into their thoughts, and have no place in their plans and calculations. And as they grow old, and the powers of nature begin slowly and successively to break and fail, how melancholy is the sight to any thoughful beholder. How painful is it to see them, while the things of this life and this world are so soon to disappear for ever from their view, and while the thin bleached hair, the dimmed eye, the wrinkled countenance, the trembling and skinny hand, the stooping frame, and the tottering step, are so many tokens of the end—how revolting is it to a thoughtful mind to see them still caring for nothing and thinking of nothing but these transient and unreal interests. How painful to see an old man, upon whose path the lengthening shadows from life's

sunset fall dark and heavy, while yet he has no devout concious-ness, no serious habitual sense of his relations to the vast unseen; an old man whose decaying powers announce the approach of death and the nearness of eternity; but who can resist and counteract the growing apathy of age, only as he persists in vexing himself with worldly cares, still scheming and scrambling to add a little more to the accumulations which he must leave so soon. How unlike to this, how beautiful in the comparison, is the old age of the believer—an old age of faith. How tranquil and heavenly the light that, amid the shadows of departing time, beams on the believing mind. Think of such a mind, full of matured and steadfast trust in God, long conversant with God and with eternity, rich in thoughts and affections that stretch beyond the bounds of earth and time, calmly reposing on the reality of things not seen, assured that God's design of love shall be accomplished on earth and in Heaven; —how beautiful is the triumph of grace over the decay of nature!

2. The old age of the Christian, as distinguished from the old age of the ungodly, is characterized by *hope*. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, as well as the evidence of things not seen. The language of faith is, I know in whom I have believed, and that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day. The believing mind, believing in God as He has revealed Himself in the Gospel, believing in things unseen and eternal, as those things eternal are manifested in the light of Christ's atoning cross; cannot but hope, for that mind knows and is assured that the Judge of all the earth will do right, and will cause all things to work together for good to them that love Him. In regard to the things of this life, the things that are seen and are temporal, the things which the men of this world live for, youth is the period of expectation. But as old age comes on, the illusion which young imagination threw over the future of time gradually disappears. To the aged, the glory and the bloom of this life are no more; and if this life is all to them—if they are without God in the world—if they have no hope within the veil, no inspiring consciousness of august and blessed relations to God and to eternity, what have they to hope for? Between them and that gloomy depth there lies the grave, only a dark, cold, arid remnant of existence, over which imagination itself, now languid and decaying, can spread no light nor bloom for hope to live upon. The aged unbeliever, without God in the world; the aged worldling, to whom, in his selfishness, his own plans are everything, and God's plans nothing—what is there in the world to come that he can hope for? What in this world that he can leave in God's hands with the hope that God will care for it? If he has property, he can make his will and appoint his executors, and amuse himself with turning his houses and lands into ready money, as if to take it with him, and he can build him a sepulcher, and give orders for his grave-clothes and his coffin; but what more? When all this is done, which way shall he look? But how different is it with the aged believer! To him, indeed,

as to others, old age is the evening of life, its dim light still fading into darkness. But to him faith opens a vista, through which the soul looks forth in hope beyond the deepening shadows around him. Nor is earth itself dark to him as it is dark to the ungodly. That which the grace of God has long ago taught him to regard as the highest of all interests here—the great cause of God and of the world's recovery from the curse of man's apostacy—that great work, more important in his affections than any transient and selfish interest of his own, is not dependent on him. Much as he has cared for it and prayed for it, much as he has denied himself and labored in its behalf, he knows that it fails not when his powers fail, nor dies when he dies. The decay of nature, then, brings to him no decay of hope in regard to the great object for which he has been living. His old age is an old age of hope.

3. The old age of the believer is an old age of *cheerfulness*. In the gradual decay of the various bodily powers, in the dim eclipse which slowly comes upon the faculties of the mind, in the conciousness of a steady and resistless approach toward the utmost boundary of the term of human life, there are influences constantly operating to produce depression of spirits. And when the old man begins to find that he is old, by feeling that he is not what he once was, and that others are more sensible of it than he is himself; when he finds himself no longer called on, as he once was, for the various services and duties of active life; when he finds himself crowded, as it were, off the stage by the men of a younger generation; there is in all this a strong tendency to an unhappy and irritable habit of mind. The old man, unless grace sustains him when nature decays, is in great danger of becoming discontented, querulous and morose, and of thinking that in proportion as he grows old, all around him grows worse. And it is not by any mere appeal to conscience, it is not by the mere force of prohibition and censure, marking and declaring the wickedness of the thing, that these tendencies to depression, and discontent, and querulousness, are to be effectually resisted. They must be counteracted by a living force within. That counteracting force the believer experiences in the power of faith and in the grace of God that dwells within him. Faith surrounds him with the calm excitement of great and glorious realities; realities that grow nearer and brighter to his mind as the world of sense and time grows dim with age. Hope, leaning upon the love and power of God, and looking forth toward Heaven, raises him above the depressing influences of infirmity and decay. His habitual communion with God, the sympathy of his mind with the plans and movements of Almighty goodness, and the various effects which a long continued course of gracious self-discipline has wrought upon his soul, enable him to resist the tendency to discontent and moroseness which beset him in the gradual failure of the powers of nature. How beautiful is an unrepining, bright, cheerful old age! How doubly beautiful when that calm, bright cheerfulness, lighting up the evening of life, is caught from Heaven, and is none other than the cheerfulness of a mind at peace

with God and in communion with his boundless blessedness. How often do we see something of this, if not the full reality, in the old age of piety!

4. The old age of the Christian, as distinguished from that of the ungodly, is characterized by *affection*. There is ordinarily in extreme age a tendency to apathy, an unmoved lethargic state of the sensibilities, in which the affections, sharing in the common decay of nature, wither and dwindle away. The old man's sympathies with those around him are less easily awakened than they once were; and, as he grows older, he feels less and less interest in any of his friends, save those who happen to be essential to his comfort. Of course, the Christian in his old age is not exempted from this tendency. Extreme age has the same effect on his sensibilities as on the sensibilities of other men, and he, as the process of decay goes on, may lose the warmth of his interest in those around him, and even in the dearest of his friends. But in his case there is a counteracting power. His faith and hope, the habitual cheerfulness of his spirit, and the communion of his soul with the infinite love of God, are like a constant cordial to his nature, that keeps his mind elastic, and quickens all his better sympathies. His sense of having almost done with life does not diminish his interest in man, for he sees in man a partaker of eternity. He does not lose his interest in the Church of God, for that he cannot lose till faith and hope are dead. He does not lose his interest in those near to him by the ties of nature, for while mind and memory remain, and he knows the names of the faces of those that love him, he knows them in their relations to eternity and to the Savior. Thus, if his mental faculties are not utterly obscured, he lives on, believing, hoping, cheerful, and loving to the end.

5. Thus it comes to pass that the old age of the Christian is characterized to the last by *usefulness*. The old man, too old for activity and labor, what is he worth to his friends or to the world, if he is without godliness, and, consequently, without those effects of godliness upon the character of old age which we have been tracing out. Of what use is he, save as in God's providence, he is the passive instrument of admonishing others of their frailty and mortality, and of the guilt and danger of living and dying without God? But how many ways does God find to make his children, amid the infirmities of declining age, useful to others. They shall bring forth fruit in old age, to show that God is faithful to them that trust in Him. How persuasive is the testimony which they give for God and for godliness, out of their long experience! How winning are their words of counsel and of invitation! How attractive is the sight of the faith and hope, the cheerfulness and love, with which they wait all the days of their appointed time till their change comes! How touching, and how valuable beyond its intrinsic efficacy, is every little act of duty or affection put forth by their enfeebled and decaying powers! To the last, they shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. And when that light, glimmering no more below, has been transferred to shed a

clearer radiance from a higher sphere, how does their blessed memory linger upon earth to draw survivors after them.

It now remains for us to make some more direct application of the train of thought into which our contemplation of the text has led us.

1. The consideration of the beauty and happiness of piety in old age, is an argument to the young to remember their Creator in the days of their youth. There is no young person here so profane or so thoughtless as not to see that piety in old age is venerable, and beautiful, and happy. Why is it so? Why is the character of the aged believer any more to be respected, or his state any more to be desired, than the character and the state of the aged worldling? I can tell you. Piety, that is repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; piety, that is the love and service of God with the whole heart; is a reasonable thing, a right thing, and therefore it is beautiful and happy. It is, in old or young, the very highest form of human character. It is the crown of human nature. Without it, man, whatever else he may have, is a degraded, blighted, wretched creature, shorn of his glory, and wandering into the blackness of darkness for ever. With it, man, though weary, and faint, and weeping, though compassed about with infirmity, and crushed with burthens, and soiled with the dust of labor and of conflict, and only in part delivered from the debasement of a fallen nature, is an angel of God, struggling upward and soon to be free in the purity and light of Heaven. It is this, and nothing else than this, that makes piety seem so venerable, so beautiful and so happy in old age. If you did not know this, you would see no reason, and feel none, why an old man on the verge of time, whose last sands of life are falling, might not as well be an ungodly worldling as a believer. Knowing this, you hope that your old age, if ever you live to be old, will be the old age of piety. Tell us, then, ought you not now remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come, when the vigor and the joyousness, the activity and the liveliness of life are over, and the years draw nigh—those years of decrepitude and weariness, of dimness and decay—in the which you will say I have no pleasure in them. O! how rarely can you find an aged Christian—one to whom the hoary head is indeed a crown of glory—who was not in his early days a believer, a penitent, a follower of Christ, a child of God. What madness is it on your part if you do not choose and seek that one thing, without which life is all vanity and guilt before God, and death is death eternal.

2. Our subject addresses itself powerfully to those who are old, or are growing old, without piety. Is there here one aged person, man or woman, that is living without God, living for this world alone, living without repentance, living without hope? O! what a night is that which is gathering around you! Let me entreat you, then, to think of these things before, in the progress of infirmity, it shall be too late for thought—nay, before death shall close the period of probation and seal your destiny! Let me entreat you to

ask yourself whether you may not now turn to God, and find, at this last hour, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin!

3. The subject we have been considering should lead us all to a grateful acknowledgment of the grace of God in the examples, which we are permitted to see, of aged and venerable piety.

One such example has been, within the past week, removed from this church, we doubt not, to the General Assembly and Church of the First Born. To dwell for a moment on some notices of her long life, and on the remembrance of her humble and retiring but attractive piety, is only an imperfect acknowledgment of the grace of God in her, and may be profitable to us as a closing illustration of our subject.

The venerable widow, Mary Dwight, who died on the morning of the last Lord's day, was born at Dosoris, Long Island, on the 11th of April, 1754—a century ago, lacking only eight years and a half.* Sixty-eight years ago, at the age of 23, she was married, and entered upon domestic life as the wife of one who was devoted to the service of God in the ministry of the gospel. Her husband was, for the first year after their marriage, a chaplain in the army of the revolution—in consideration of which she received for a few of the last years of her life, a pension as the widow of a revolutionary officer. At the end of that year, her position in life was suddenly changed. Her husband was recalled from that public employment by the death of his father, and was made, in the providence of God, the temporary head of the bereaved family, his widowed mother and his brothers and sisters looking to him for protection and aid. Thus, for five years, they resided at Northampton, in his mother's family; he, meanwhile, burthened with secular cares and labors, preaching in vacant congregations, and employing his great and peculiar talents as a teacher, and she, in all this, his comfort, his joy, and his help. Then came another change, and for twelve years her husband was the pastor of the church at Greenfield, in this State, and, at the same time, the head of a private but large and flourishing institution for the education of youth. Thus, from a very early period of life, her position was continually one of great responsibility, at once conspicuous, and laborious, and requiring an uncommon combination of qualities in the mind and in the heart. In the year 1795, Dr. Dwight became as you all know, the President of Yale College, in which office he served for twenty-three years. What his labors and cares were in that station, and what share of them naturally and necessarily devolved upon her, I need not attempt to describe. In 1817, at the age of 63, after forty years of happy wedded life, she became a widow, and retired to be an inmate in the dwelling of her eldest son, where she continued till her death—more than twenty-eight years. That house to which she withdrew in her old age, to spend, as she supposed, the little evening of her life, has been her home

* She was the daughter of Benjamin Woolsey, Esq.; between whom and the father of President Dwight there was an intimacy, begun when they were classmates and roommates at college, and continued to the close of life.

for a longer period than any other house that she ever called her home.

In attempting, not a delineation of her character, but a brief notice of some of its most interesting and instructive traits, it is most obvious to remark that she has been, through life, so far as any of the living generation are able to testify, a beautiful example of conscientious fidelity in all the duties that belonged to her sex, her relations and her station in society. The heart of her husband trusted in her. Her children rise up and call her blessed. Her children's children honor her, and, to the close of her life, they delighted to do her reverence. She contributed all that belonged to her part toward augmenting the attractiveness of that hospitality which made her husband's home the resort of friends and of strangers. She was the friend of the poor, and especially like a mother to the poor young man aspiring to the pursuit of knowledge and to the service of God in the ministry.* Her gentleness and kindness taught all to love her, her uniform and graceful dignity constrained all to regard her with the deference appropriate to her character and station. Her prudence and skill in the management of her household affairs, and her habits of economy and industry, relieved her husband of many cares that might otherwise have withdrawn him in part, at least, from those great public duties to which he was called of God.

It is equally to be remarked, for the remark is essential to a just conception of the symmetry and beauty of her character, that she was never found wandering from her proper sphere. Such was her instinctive feminine sense of propriety, that while she never withdrew from any responsibilities that belonged to her position and relations, she had no ambition, no uneasiness of disposition, no passion for conspicuity, leading her away from her appropriate duties to attempt those things which God had not given her to do. This is the more worthy to be noticed as it was manifestly no small part of the loveliness and dignity which adorned her, and by which she adorned her station.

Her meekness, her humble self-distrust, her jealousy against self-deception was another noticeable trait of her character. She never thought of herself, in any respect, and least of all in respect to her own piety, more highly than she ought to think. Her religious experience being from first to last without any of those strongly-marked crises which sometimes give distinctness and assurance to the consciousness of reconciliation with God, she was never able to refer to any precise period as to the date of her renewal by the Holy Spirit. Thus under the influence of a timidity which was, no doubt, in this particular, excessive, she was prevented from making a public profession of her trust in the Savior till after the death of her husband, when, in the year 1819, she was received

* Many who are now eminently and widely useful in the Church, remember with grateful affection her maternal kindness as First Manager of the "Female Education Society," an association of ladies which has been for thirty years employed in helping on their way to usefulness pious and dependent young men in Yale College.

into covenant with this church on the profession of her faith. Since that period, not only has her religious character been more distinctly developed to her friends and to the world, but her decision and purpose to be on the Lord's side, and her affectionate though trembling confidence in Christ as her Redeemer, have been more clearly manifested to her own consciousness. Yet to the last she has had continually, as those who knew her could see without her taking pains to tell of it, a very low opinion of her own piety.

Yet we need not hesitate to say that her character was marked distinctly by faith as the apprehension of things not seen, and in particular by a trust in God's promises. I cannot doubt that it was by this, in part, that her characteristic cheerfulness and affectionateness were kept up so remarkably to the end of her long life. She had a strong and child-like belief in the efficacy of prayer—often asking her Christian friends with great simplicity to pray for her; and whenever her children, in the last years of her life, were brought together from their several distant homes, she was always unwilling that they should part without uniting in a family prayer-meeting. How much she loved the Holy Scriptures; her own Bible, devoutly read day by day through a long series of years, is a witness. One of the special comforts of the last two or three years of her life, after her sight had grown very dim, was a beautiful English copy of the New Testament, with the book of Psalms, in an uncommonly large type, which was presented to her by a clerical friend, and which she read through again and again in her devotions, when other books had become quite illegible. There were favorite promises from the Holy Book which she loved to recall; and, in particular, that beautiful expression of God's care and love, "Even to your old age I am He, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you," was often upon her lips. In like manner, she had her favorite hymns, expressive of trust in God; and sweet hymns were always the dearer to her because her mind, by nature and by culture, from her childhood up, delighted in poetry. One of the latest utterances from her lips, when death was already coming upon her, was the repetition of that beautiful psalm which was sung before the commencement of this discourse. It was on Saturday, just at evening, about twelve hours before she breathed her last. Her daughter-in-law, at her bed-side, repeated to her the hymn:

"How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord,"

for that was a favorite with her, and then began the psalm:

"Up to the hills I lift mine eyes;"

but she herself immediately caught the words from her daughter's lips, and repeated the psalm to the close. In such a filial faith toward God she died, gently and fearlessly falling asleep, though all her lifetime she had shrunk from the thought of death with a constitutional timidity. On the morning of the day preceding her dissolution, she said to her daughter-in-law: "I think I shall die to-day." "And are you not willing and ready to die?" was the answer. "Yes," she said, "I trust I am ready." Thus the grace

on which she rested humbly and tremblingly, was sufficient for her to the end. She was ready, and God has taken her.

Yes; God has taken her, we cannot doubt, to the great reunion of his people in the presence of their Savior and in the participation of his glory. And with this thought, we return to complete our illustration of the subject of this discourse. It is one of the felicities of the Christian in old age that, though death has parted him from so many of those nearest and dearest friends who were God's friends as well as his, death shall soon bring him again to their blessed society. The aged disciple of whom I have been speaking, has borne, meekly and patiently, the sorrow of many a sad parting. But God has been her refuge in grief, and He who is the dwelling-place of his people in all generations, is now her dwelling-place for ever. When her husband died, and the grief was not hers and her children's only, but the general grief of the college, the city, the State, and the Church, she said to one who was writing to communicate the tidings to an absent son: "Say to him, shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Those who part in such a temper, leaning in their grief upon God, may have it among their consolations that, though death divides them for a season, death shall come again, in God's good time, to reunite them where partings are unknown, and where sorrow and sighing flee away."

PSALM 121.

DIVINE PROTECTION.

Up to the hills I lift mine eyes,
Th' eternal hills beyond the skies;
Thence all her help my soul derives;
There my almighty refuge lives.

He lives; the everlasting God,
That built the world, that spread the flood;
The heavens with all their hosts He made,
And the dark regions of the dead.

He guides our feet, He guards our way;
His morning smiles bless all the day:
He spreads the evening veil, and keeps
The silent hours, while Israel sleeps.

Israel, a name divinely blest,
May rise secure, securely rest;
The holy Guardian's wakeful eyes
Admit no slumber, nor surprise.

No sun shall smite thy head by day;
Nor the pale moon with sickly ray
Shall blast thy couch; no baleful star
Dart his malignant fire so far.

Should earth and hell with malice burn,
Still thou shalt go and still return,
Safe in the Lord; his heavenly care
Defends thy life from every snare.

On thee foul spirits have no power;
And, in thy last departing hour,
Angels, that trace the airy road,
Shall bear thee homeward to thy God.

SERMON CCCCXVI.

THE DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS A CAUSE FOR LAMENTATION.

A DISCOURSE delivered December 9, 1845, at the funeral of the Hon. John Cotton Smith, President of the American Bible Society.

BY REV. GROVE L. BROWNELL,

PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SHARON, CONN.

1 SAMUEL XXV: 1. "And Samuel died: and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah."

WE may prize a blessing while we have it in our possession, but we may not estimate it according to its real value until we are deprived of it by a wise and holy Providence. This is too often true in relation to those distinguished members of the human family whom God has raised up to bless the Church and the world. We have an affecting illustration of this in the case of the subject of our text. He was eminently instrumental in advancing both the temporal and spiritual interests of the nation of Israel: but it is evident from sacred record, that they did not duly estimate his worth, until he was removed from them by the hand of death. Then they more fully realized the excellence of his character and the extent of his usefulness among them. Then they sincerely and deeply lamented him, and deplored the loss they were called to sustain in his removal. All Israel were gathered together to weep over him, and to bury him in his house or prepared tomb, at Ramah: and their conduct on this occasion, as all will admit, was proper. His personal merits and his former public services, rendered this general expression of respect to his name and memory a just debt, and it had been ungrateful to have withheld it.

It is right to mourn over our departed friends, when our grief is properly restricted. The simple act of lamenting them is not forbidden in the sacred writings. It is, indeed, sanctioned by the example of good men in former ages, and even by that of the Saviour of mankind. When the patriarch Jacob died, his son Joseph went up with chariots and horsemen in great numbers to bury him in the land of Canaan; and there he made a mourning for his father seven days. In view of the expressions of their sorrow, the Canaanites said: "This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians!" When Aaron died, all the congregation of Israel mourned for him thirty days; and, during a like period, they wept for Moses in the plains of Moab. Devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him, and at the grave of his friend Lazarus, Jesus wept; thence, to mourn, simply considered, is not inconsistent with any principle or duty of the Christian system. Christianity, instead of rendering us insensible to the worth of our

virtuous friends, teaches us to value them more highly. Instead of suppressing the rising sigh and the gathering tear over their pillow of death, and over their grave, she bids them come forth to recall the deep and hidden emotions of the soul to the honor of her blessed name. Instead of weakening, it adds new strength to natural affection, when the heart is imbued with the spirit of truth and grace. It is the merciful design of our Heavenly Father that we should feel afflicted by the removal of our friends into eternity. Their death is his voice of admonition—his rod of correction, by means of which we are made partakers of his holiness.

In the providence of God, a great and a good man has fallen in the midst of us; one, who, like Samuel, has been a ruler and judge in the land, and an able and faithful advocate of the truth and cause of God; and, like Israel of old, we are now assembled to lament and bury him.

I am prompted by the words of the text and by the occasion which has convened us, to state and explain some of the principal reasons why we should lament the removal of the pious and useful members of the community.

1. When one who has been distinguished for his piety and usefulness is removed by death, it is a just cause for lamentation that so much moral excellence is taken from a sinful needy world.

I stand on this watch-tower in Zion and look around me, and my heart sickens and almost dies within me when I see that there are so few among the many that bear any resemblance to the moral character of their Maker; hence, these few who exhibit some evidence of loyalty to Zion's King in their conformity to his will, are precious in my view; for their moral excellence constitutes the only true adornment of our fallen race—they are the light and glory of this lower creation. Extinguish these lights which the grace of God has created, and in what gross darkness the communities where they have shined would be inveloped.

How glorious the moral excellence of Noah, when viewed in contrast with the moral deformity of the thousands by whom he was surrounded. His soul was the only one on which the pure eye of Jehovah, running to and fro throughout that generation, could rest with any complacence. He was the only light to expose the darkness of idolatry, and to reprove the wickedness which prevailed around him. And so of Lot in Sodom. He only, among the thousands with whom he dwelt, reflected the bright beams of the sun of righteousness upon the surrounding darkness.

Were not these holy men a great blessing to the people of their generation? Would not their early removal have been a signal frown upon their contemporaries? Did not their existence among them serve to check the progress of vice and crime, and to delay the judgments of God's holy throne? The flood came not, the fiery shower was suspended until they were removed to a place of safety. And what was then the fate of the old world and of Sodom?

You may say, perhaps, that the case of these holy men was a peculiar one, and that their removal would have been a greater

calamity than the removal of many of the righteous at the present day. Be it so: but, then, let me ask, when was there a time, from the fall of man to the present moment, that any of the excellent of the earth, in the judgment of the friends of God, could well be spared? In this age, and in this land even, so distinguished as it has been by revivals of religion, and by a consequent increase of the number of the Redeemer's friends, what place has more pious and faithful men than the necessities of Zion seem to demand? Where is the place in which the removal of one such person, though late in life, would not be a lamentable event in Providence? Where would they not have reason to cry: "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men!" Heaven is, indeed, rendered more glorious by such accessions to its numbers; but earth looses its glory in the same proportion: and we have reason to be afflicted and to mourn when we see the amount of moral excellence thus diminished here below. Then why are we so insensible to our loss; why so unmoved when one is taken after another, in quick succession, from the struggling Church on earth?

2. When the righteous are removed by death, it is a just cause for lamentation that the exercise of so much benevolent feeling is lost to the surviving community.

Selfishness almost universally prevails as the ruling principle of action among the members of the human family. Indeed little, very little, of true benevolence is to be found on earth; and that little is of heavenly origin. They only who are born of God sincerely regard and strive to promote the best interests of their fellow-creatures. He who has imbibed the spirit of Christ is a friend to all, and desires their prosperity and happiness in regard to both their temporal and spiritual interests. He is prepared to rejoice with those that rejoice, and to weep with those that weep.

The removal of such a person by death, is, to the children of God, a just cause for lamentation. They will no more experience his sympathy in the trials and afflictions of their earthly pilgrimage. As they journey on to the gates of death through life's rugged path, his presence will cheer and encourage their hearts no more. He will assist them no more in their spiritual work by his faithful admonitions, by his heavenly counsels, and by his fervent prayers. No more will his friendly hand be extended to aid them in bearing their burdens. As children of God's grace, as members of the same spiritual family, as fellow-heirs of the kingdom of glory, he sincerely and ardently loved them, and he delighted in their society. He loved to meet them in the house of God, at the table of their common Lord, and at the appointed season for social prayer. But the exercise of such benevolent affection, which rendered him so dear to the saints below, qualified him for union and fellowship with the Church above: and to that higher sphere of usefulness and happiness God has called him, and they are now left to lament their loss in his removal.

But, if they who are heirs of eternal life—if they who are soon

to join the company of the redeemed in Heaven, have reason to lament when one of their number is removed by death, how much more reason have they to lament who are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, without God and without hope in the world? Who on this side of eternity realizes the worth of the immortal soul like him who is prepared to go up to glory? Who else has an affecting view of that eternal state of happiness beyond the grave? And who, but such a child of God, sincerely and ardently desires the salvation of the lost and perishing children of men?

Let my impenitent hearers make the case their own. You have no hope toward God, and you have no heart to seek the salvation of your soul: but there is one who compassionates your case as sinners—who desires, above all things, your immortal welfare: and that friend is a child of God, and has liberty of access to his throne of grace. He kindly admonishes you of your danger, and entreats you to turn and live; and you are convinced that his closet bears witness daily to his prayers and tears on your account. But he dies; and leaves you unreconciled to God. His admonitions and entreaties have now ceased for ever—he will weep and pray for you no more. In a case like this, would you not have cause to lament the removal of the man who made your immortal interests the object of his benevolent regard until his eyes were closed in death? Under the subduing and melting influence of such recollections as these, many among the impenitent have stood and wept over the graves of departed saints.

3. When the righteous are removed by death, it is a just cause for lamentation that the world is deprived of the salutary influence of their example.

Until the judgment shall reveal it, the extent of such influence cannot be fully known. It will then be clearly seen how many have been reproved and restrained in their course of iniquity by witnessing the godly example of the saints. Yes; it will then appear that many, very many, have been brought to repentance by this means. Great, indeed, must be the moral influence of the man who walks circumspectly before the world; who is an upright and consistent Christian every day; who is always seen in his place in the sanctuary; who is known to sanctify the sabbath, and to worship God in his family and in the closet; who has set his house in order; who exhibits convincing proof that his affections are set on things above, and who is evidently waiting for his summons to depart and be with Christ. When such persons are removed from the Church below, we have much reason to lament their absence. They have stood as pillars to support this heavenly building; they have contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; they have assisted in maintaining the discipline of God's house; and they have fervently offered up their prayers to God for the prosperity of Zion. But their active usefulness in the Church below has now ceased, and they have gone up to a brighter and nobler sphere of action in glory and immortality.

Then, plainly, it is not on *their* account that we lament their death, but on account of the loss which the Church and the world sustain in their removal. Surely we have no reason to deplore the lot of one who sleeps in Jesus. It was infinite gain for him to die. Though we now see through a glass darkly, yet our present measure of knowledge of the blessedness and glory of the departed saint forbids us to exclaim: Alas! my brother; hard is the fate to be imprisoned in the tomb! Thy light of life is extinguished, and the night of death has shrouded thy once loved form in deep and perpetual gloom! Better, far better, had it been for thee to have lingered still longer with us on these mortal shores! No, we cannot thus lament over the grave of the pious dead. That blessed gospel which brings life and immortality to light, and which reveals the glorious inheritance of the saints in the future world, forbids it. Than such language, nothing could be more inappropriate to their case.

Consider for a moment the happy change which they have experienced, and you will realize their gain. Here, they may never have been clothed with the honors of office; but there they are kings and priests unto God and the Father. Here they may have possessed uncertain and unsatisfactory riches; but there they have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and unfading. Here below they were strangers and pilgrims, having no continuing city; but now they have gone home to that glorious city which God had prepared for them; they are fellow-citizens with the saints in the heavenly Zion. Here they dwelt in a frail, miserable tenement of clay; but now they have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Here their vision of divine things was limited and obscure; but there they see God face to face; they see Jesus as he is, and behold with wonder and adoration the triumphs of his cross and the glories of his crown. How clear is their vision now, and how extensive their prospect of eternal things. Here they were disquieted with doubts and fears respecting the final trial of their faith; but these have passed away like the momentary causeless anxieties and imaginary dangers of a dream. They have awaked in eternity, and are safe. They feared the swellings of Jordan; but they have stemmed and passed that flood, and entered joyfully the land of promise—the Heavenly Canaan. They have met the last enemy, and have conquered; yea, they are more than conqueror's through Him that hath loved them. Here, in this vale of tears, they once sorrowed and wept; but now the days of their mourning are ended, and their tears are wiped away; their sorrow is turned into joy—into *fulness* of joy and pleasures for evermore.

But shall we here turn away our thoughts from those who are put in possession of this rich inheritance—of this glorious and unfading crown? No: in imagination we pursue after them as they go on gaining new accessions of knowledge and happiness, and rising from one degree of glory to another. The highest seraph in Heaven, were his greatness and glory fully displayed to our view, would appear to us like a god; and, like John in Patmos, we should

be tempted to fall down and worship at his feet. But the period in eternity will soon arrive when they who have just entered the heavenly world will have so far surpassed the present attainments of that highest seraph in knowledge, happiness and glory, as *his* now surpasses theirs. And they will yet hold on their glorious career without arriving at a final period in their progress: and never, at any stage, will it be possible for them to conceive what further accessions of knowledge, felicity and glory are still reserved for them! Can we, then, with any semblance of propriety, indulge a sigh or encourage a tear over the grave of the departed saint for his own sake?

The subject to which we have now given our attention is applicable to our own case. The removal of Governor Smith by death, is to us all a just cause for lamentation. The relatives mourn not alone; we are all afflicted by this event of God's providence. Respect to his name and memory, and fidelity to the cause of Christ, justly demand a public notice of his character as a man and as a Christian.

John Cotton Smith was the son of Rev. Cotton Mather, and Mrs. Temperance Smith, and was born February 12, 1765. In his infancy he was publicly dedicated to God in baptism by his devotedly pious parents, and trained up by them in such a way as to warrant the expectation, which they fondly cherished, of his future piety and usefulness. At the age of fourteen, he entered Yale College, and graduated there in 1783. He soon after entered upon the study of the law, in the office of John Canfield, Esq., of this town, and was admitted to the bar in this county in March, 1786. But here his career, though brilliant, was comparatively short, as he was early called to higher official duties. His first election as a representative of his native town to the General Assembly took place in the year 1793. He was afterward chosen a representative in both sessions of the General Assembly in the years 1796, '97, '98, and '99; and in the latter session of the last named year he was chosen Clerk of the House. In May, 1800, he was chosen Speaker; and, in September of the same year, he was elected a representative to the second session of the Sixth Congress, being the first session of that body held at the present seat of government. He was re-elected to the Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Congress; but after the first session of the Ninth Congress, he resigned his seat in July, 1806. In October of the same year, he was again elected a representative to the State Legislature, and chosen Speaker of that body. And also in 1807-8. In 1809, he was elected a member of the Council; and in October of that year, he was appointed an associate judge of the Superior Court, and of the Supreme Court of Errors. In May, 1811-12, he was chosen Lieutenant Govenor; and from the death of Governor Grisworld, in October, 1812, he officiated as Chief Magistrate to the end of the term. He was then chosen Governor, and continued in the office four years. He received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from the Corporation of Yale College in September, 1814. In April, 1813, he was

elected a member of the Historical Society of Massachusetts; and in July, 1836, a member of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquarians, in Copenhagen, in Denmark. In 1826, he was chosen President of the A. B. C. F. M.; and in 1831, he was elected President of the American Bible Society, which latter office he held to the time of his decease.*

All these public stations he filled with ability and integrity. He presided over deliberative bodies with ease and dignity. He had few, if any, equals, as a presiding officer; and it is believed that he had no superior among his contemporaries. In the transaction of public business he was attentive and diligent, ever serving his generation faithfully. Perhaps, few men in public life have more sincerely aimed to promote the general welfare, or have been more successful in the benevolent undertaking. His life extended over a very interesting and important period of our country's history, and his influence has been greatly felt in establishing upon a firm basis and in perpetuating our civil and religious institutions.

The natural endowments of Governor Smith were of a superior order, and he was diligent in cultivating his mind and in storing it with various knowledge; and he thus qualified himself to fill places of public trust, with honor to himself and with great usefulness to his fellow-men. He was a correct and accomplished scholar. He was an indulgent companion and father, and an affectionate and faithful friend. For his gentlemanly deportment at all times and on all occasions, he was greatly distinguished. He was uniformly courteous to all, and he kindly welcomed all who called to pay him their respects, and strangers left his hospitable dwelling with veneration for the man, and with grateful recollections of their profitable intercourse with him. Very few men have been more extensively known, revered and loved. Great confidence was reposed in his judgment and discretion, especially in relation to the management of the benevolent enterprises of the day; and his advice was sought from distant parts of the land by those who were not personally known to him.

Much more might, in truth, be said of Governor Smith as a man, but I speak not to strangers; I speak of him to those who have known him longer and better than myself.

But if there was much to admire, revere, and love in him as a man, there was much to admire, revere, and love in him as a Christian. He was not a perfect man, he did not pretend to be, and yet we rarely find a person of fewer blemishes in his character. His mind was pure; his heart was benevolent. Governor Smith was hopefully converted in early life, and publicly professed his discipleship under the ministry of his honored father; and he walked worthy of his high vocation, adorning the doctrine of God our Sa-

* It may not be uninteresting here to state that the President of the French and Foreign Bible Society, Admiral Count Ver Huell, died but a few days before Gov. Smith, at nearly the same age; and that a communication addressed to the latter has just been received at the Bible House, announcing this event, from Count Delaborde, the Secretary.

viour, even amid the peculiar temptations and trials of his public career. After his retirement from office, his devotedness increased, and toward the close of his pilgrimage he exhibited the clearest evidence of a softened and subdued spirit, and of an uncommon ripeness for Heaven. His last painful illness he endured with almost unparalleled patience, and with unmurmuring submission to the will of God. If he appeared to us great in his life, he appeared more truly so in his death; and we trust he is now exalted before the throne of God, adoring and praising Him with the blest company who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Governor Smith was a lineal descendant of the Puritans—imbibed strongly their religious principles and system of faith—and was neither afraid nor ashamed to avow them openly. No man more than he revered the character and honored the memory of those worthies; and he exerted his influence to the last to sustain the institutions which they, with great labor and sacrifice, established. Without any spirit of intolerance, he loved and firmly adhered to the church of his own denomination, with its simple, energetic order.

He loved the Bible as the inspired book of God, and as the only rule of faith and practice; and his habit of perusing its sacred pages is highly worthy of our imitation. As he was preeminently a man of order in all other concerns, so he was in this. Besides detached portions at family worship and at other occasions, he has read the Bible through in course annually for the last eight or ten years, and committed large portions of the New Testament to memory.

He remembered the sabbath day to keep it holy, and he reverenced the place where God's honor dwelleth. Though in his last days he was deprived in a great degree of the privilege of *hearing* the word, yet, from love to the place, and as an example to others, he was regularly found in the sanctuary.

He loved the duty of prayer in public, and in the family, and in the closet; and he continued the practice of kneeling and praying to his Father in secret, even after he had ceased to recognize his earthly friends.

He loved the benevolent institutions of the age; and, in a particular manner, he exerted his influence and contributed liberally of his substance to send the gospel to the heathen, and to disseminate copies of the word of God among the destitute.

Such, in brief, was the man whom we are called to lament and bury to-day. And we, as a Christian community, have great reason to lament him. He has long stood as a pillar in the Church, and his last anxiety was for the welfare of this beloved Zion. It was his heart's desire and prayer to God that we might be saved.

But his work is done, and he has gone to his everlasting reward in the Zion above. We shall meet him no more in this sanctuary, nor in the circle of prayer, nor in social intercourse. But let us all strive to be prepared to meet him in a more permanent and blissful intercourse above.

This respected circle of mourners will excuse me, if, in obedience to my feelings, my words to them on this afflictive occasion be few. Your honored father and devoted friend is now severed from your embrace. That heart is now cold which was once so warm with natural and benevolent affection for you; and the tongue is now parallyzed and mute, on which once dwelt the law of kindness, and which so often served to bless, to instruct, and to guide you in the path of truth, of holiness, and of Heaven. You have great reason to thank and to praise God that he gave you such a father and friend, and that he continued him with you so long: and now that He has removed him by death, it becomes you to humble yourselves under his mighty hand. Your Heavenly Father has laid his rod of correction upon you with the benevolent design of making you partakers of his holiness. In his death you are admonished to be prepared to follow him. His instructive example is before you for your imitation; and his triumphant death is before you for your encouragement to trust in his God and the God of his father. You have loved his society on earth, and may you all be prepared to enjoy it in Heaven. We commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among them who are sanctified.

AT THE GRAVE.

After the interment, the Rev. Mr. Andrews, of Kent, uttered the following remarks, which found a response in every heart present:

I return thanks on behalf of the mourners, for all the kindness you have shown to our departed friend during his sickness, and for the honors you have now paid to his memory. We all feel that a great man has fallen in Israel. Beyond the bosom of his family, in whose inmost affections his memory will be embalmed; beyond the circle of his townsmen, among whom the most of his blameless and dignified life was passed; beyond the border of his native State, which delighted to honor him, and which he faithfully served in many and most distinguished stations; even throughout our common country, whose councils he helped to guide in times of darkness and peril; and especially in the Church of God, to which he freely gave the light of his wisdom and the aid of his benefactions, will his death be mourned as a calamity. One of the noblest of the men of a former and better age has been taken from us, and "we ne'er shall look upon his like again." But our joy and boast this day, is not that he was a statesman of enlarged insight; not that he was a scholar of refined taste; not that he was a gentleman, in whose deportment dignity and courtesy were so remarkably blended—"the observed of all observers"—but that he was a meek and humble disciple of Christ, rejoicing in the consolations, reverencing the ordinances, and laboring for the advancement of the Christian Faith. And we have laid him in the grave in the hope of a blessed resurrection, assured that the spirit, which now rests in peace, shall at the coming of our King, be re-united to the body, then raised and glorified after the likeness of the Lord. Amen.

FAMILY PRAYER.

'A HIGH and solemn duty rests on every father of a family to present himself, morning and evening with his family at the throne of grace. God commands it—duty requires it—gratitude for daily mercies enforces it. Such a duty cannot be habitually neglected without great danger of incurring the displeasure of God, and bringing his deep frown on the family that does it. Could the causes which have ruined so many children and youth, and rendered them a grief and living affliction to their parents and friends be traced to their true source, it would doubtless be found in habitual negect of family prayer. The silent and solemn judgments of God rest on such familes, because of this neglect to call on his name. "Pour out Thy fury on the nations that know Thee not, and upon the families that call not upon Thy name." Jer. 10: 25—is the affecting language of Jehovah, and may help to explain the waywardness and ruin which comes upon many an otherwise promising youth. The fact that a father of a family is not a professor of religion, furnishes no valid excuse for the neglect of family prayer. He ought to be a Christian and a praying man. His duties and relations to God and to his children require it.

On the other hand, what a beautiful spectacle is family piety. At the appointed hour, see the father, like the high priest of his household, assemble his family and conduct his children to the throne of heavenly grace, commending them to his Father and their Father, and to his watchful providence amid all the dangers and temptations which beset their daily path in life. It secures a daily and increasing confidence in the superintending care of that great and good Being whose protection they need while they live, and whose presence and support when they come to die. The duty of family prayer is enforced by every consideration of temporal and eternal good.

'Family prayer ought to be regarded by Christians not so much as a duty which they ought to perform, as in the light of a privilege which they are permitted to enjoy.

The case is this. God gives a man the permission to come to Him at all times with all his cares, and hopes, and interests, and promises to hear and grant his petitions. He places also under

his care a family, and connected with this family are almost all his worldly enjoyments and hopes. He must find peace and happiness here, or he must be perpetually miserable. His children must be protected from the temptations and dangers which beset them, or else they must, by their sinful courses, make his latter years of life a grievous burden, and bring down his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. He has domestics, apprentices, or workmen in his household, to continue in sin or be for ever lost—or to come and give themselves up to the service of God. Now he has the permission to come with this household every day before God, and commit them to his care, and bring them under the subduing, softening influences of prayer. Can he, if he really has any love to God himself, hesitate? We trust not. He will not need to be driven to family prayer as a duty—he will cling to it eagerly, as to a privilege. If he does not, there is strong evidence that he does not understand the feelings of a true child of God.

1. Family prayer ought to be *regular*. There ought to be a regular time for it—a regular signal; and it would be better that each member of the family should have his regular, appointed place at the fireside. These things are of no importance in themselves, but they are of great importance as means of influencing hearts so under the control of circumstances and associations as ours are. If a little bell is struck at an appointed time, and the members of the household gather at once, each to his appointed seat, as arranged, perhaps, by an older child, and the service is commenced regularly and in order, the moral effect will be vastly greater, and more pleasant, and more salutary, than where the household are called together at any hour when they happen to be ready, sometimes before breakfast, sometimes after, and sometimes not at all; summoned, perhaps, by several messengers sent in opposite directions, and seating themselves in disorder, wherever they can find chairs, and moving to accommodate one another. Let no one say in reply to this that our family is so large and heterogeneous that we cannot be regular; it is in precisely such a family that order and method is most indispensable, and it is always possible to secure it. A college and a cotton factory are families with hundreds of inmates, and they are as regular as clock-work. If a large family is not regular, then it is owing not to its size, but to the habits or example of the head of it; at least, so far as family prayer is concerned, see to it that all things are done decently and in order.

2. The Bible should be read *and explained* at family prayer. Christians are seldom aware how ignorant their children and the various members of their household are of the truths and duties of religion, and even of the narratives and history of the Bible. These every master of a family can explain. He can, on the sabbath, read several chapters, with Scott, or some other commentary, and then, in the course of the week, read them to his family, a part of a chapter at each exercise, repeating the substance of the explanations and thoughts which he obtained from the commentary, and

also making other remarks which may occur to him. These explanations should be adapted to the youngest children present, and often addressed directly to them. By this means, the master of the family will increase his own knowledge of the Bible in the best possible way, and fix it in his mind, and he will awaken and concentrate the attention and the interest of all his family. For every one must have observed how immediate an effect a remark thrown in, in reading the Scriptures, has in arousing and fixing the attention of all present. Even if the explanatory remark expresses nothing in itself very new or valuable, it is of great importance for the purpose of keeping the audience interested and attentive.

3. Family prayer should be short, simple, varied and appropriate. Many of the members of the household are persons of uncultivated minds, unaccustomed to long mental effort, and others are very young, and it is better to secure good attention for a short period, than weariness and restlessness for a longer time. Hence the prayers should be short. These minds, too, are unable to grasp what is abstruce or general, or lofty in sentiment or diction; therefore they should be simple. The circumstances of a family, too, are constantly varied; the morning and evening prayers should vary too. The petition should not be always the same—it should be the simple, heartfelt expression of the desires of the head of the family, for the time being; and he should bring the wants of his household before God in simple and minute detail.

4. The head of a family, in conducting family prayer, should not have in mind its effects upon his household, but upon God. That is, he should not be thinking, while at prayer, of influencing, by means of it, the minds of his family, but should take the attitude of simple supplication before the throne of God, asking him for favors which he only can bestow. There is, indeed, a very great direct effect produced in a family by the influence of the morning and evening petition; but this effect is not what ought to be in the mind of the speaker. To be acceptable to God, prayer must be really what it pretends to be, honest, heartfelt supplication for the blessings which the heart desires. The heart, therefore, must be on God, and not on the hearers around.

The duty of family prayer, thus performed, will have a vast influence upon the character and happiness of the household.

1. It will have an immense influence in softening and soothing all the irritating passions so likely to creep into a family. If a father calls together his children and domestics, and reads and explains a portion of the Bible, and offers a simple and heartfelt prayer in their presence, one that they can understand, and appreciate, and join in, what an influence it must have upon them during the day. The father will be more kind and patient, the mother more considerate for those employed by her, the children more peaceful and accommodating; and all this will take place as a natural effect of the exercise, independent of any direct agency the prayer may have in bringing the influences of the spirit upon their minds. If a man does not thus recognize the hand of God in the government of his

household, the members of his family have nothing to remind them of their accountability to any higher power. From Monday morning to Saturday night there is nothing to bring before them their relations to God, and their need of salvation. They are thus trained up for the world, and worldly influences will, of course, have control.

2. The practice of family prayer will bring down the blessing of God upon the children as they grow up and go out into the world. "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Such is the promise; and if we habitually and heartily acknowledge God in our households, He will direct us in training them up for Him. He will guide us in all our plans and arrangements for them, and order everything for them in this world in such a way as to promote their best good. A man who brings up his children without the fear of God, cannot possibly expect to have them prosper in the world. Nothing is more common in a business, mercantile community, than for a man to neglect the worship of God in his household, in order that he may devote his whole time to his plans for making money; and then he finds at last, as his children grow up, their moral habits neglected, and destitute of all religious principle; they are utterly incapable of preserving or enjoying what their father made a slave of himself to procure for them; and the fortune, to procure which he neglected God and ruined his soul, they scatter to the winds in dissipation and vice as soon as they get possion. Ah, there is no gain in the end of any sort in attempting to live without God!

3. Family prayer is the most ready and efficient of the means of securing the salvation of the souls of our children. This service, if the parent is honest and sincere in it, has a steady and constant influence in keeping religious obligation before the minds of children, and in preparing their hearts to be affected by other means.'

A PROFITABLE SPENDING OF THE SABBATH.

'In the first place. Watch and pray, as you value your souls, against a spirit of carelessness and indifference in religion. Remember that the life of a Christian is a life of self-denial. It is a race—a pilgrimage—a warfare! Its exercises are described by wrestling, striving, watching, and the like. And of all the drones in the world, drones in God's hive are the least deserving the approbation of the Church, and the most under the frown of Heaven. The Scripture probably contains no expression of displeasure more impressive than that which is addressed to the Laodiceans, on this very subject—"So, then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold or hot, I will spurn thee out of my mouth." Yet it is astonishing how soon we may be beguiled into such a frame of mind.

The commonness of religious exercises—the attractions of the world—and, above all, the corruption of depraved nature, have a

constant influence to produce this awful indifference. And few greater evidences can be afforded of it than the neglecting the worship of God in his sanctuary, or carelessly trifling with the morning of a Lord's day.

2. Rise early. Your enjoyment of the Sabbath and your attendance upon the worship of God in the morning of it, greatly depend upon this. If you have much to do before you can unite with God's people in his house, the time of your rising must be arranged accordingly. A lazy, sluggish professor, who can satisfy himself with consuming the best part of the morning in bed, is but ill prepared for the service of his Maker in the course of it. And scandalous it certainly is to any one who names the name of Christ, that a man who would rise for a sixpence, at almost any hour or any other day in the week, should shut his ears on the morning of a sabbath, when God is calling to him from Heaven, and be lulled by the devil to sleep.

The conduct of the wicked, who can rise at any time to unite in a party of pleasure; the conduct of heathens, who are waiting the rising of the sun, in order to pay the earliest adorations to him as soon as he makes his appearance; in a word, the conduct even of Satan himself, who is always on the alert, to destroy, if possible, the comforts and souls of men, is a sufficient reproof to such individuals.

3. Endeavor to enjoy a good Saturday evening. It was a custom with the Jews to have a season of preparation, previous to the duties of the sabbath. Their sabbath began at six in the evening; and at three in the afternoon began the preparation. God grant us that anxiety for the enjoyment of the sabbath, which will lead to a preparation for it, as far as we are able; and a good frame of mind on a Saturday evening will seldom lull a person to sleep, or make him indifferent about the worship of God on a sabbath morning.

4. Think of the rapid approach of death, and endeavor to realise to yourselves the views and feelings you will then have of what you have been, and what you have done, and what you have left undone, when you are just going to give in your account unto God. It is a lamentable fact, there are not a few in our churches and congregations, who are all their life long planting thorns in that pillow upon which at last they must lie down and die; and none are doing this more effectually than the careless and the slothful. "Ah," says one on a death bed, "that I had been more actively engaged in the service of God!" "O!" cries another, in the anguish of his soul, "that I could but live my time over again! What a different person would I be! O, the sins I have committed—the duties I have neglected—the sabbaths I have murdered!" But it is in vain! He is just on the borders of eternity; and all the wealth of worlds can neither purchase him a respite from death, nor afford him an opportunity of retrieving his conduct for ever! "O, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"